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Lt. Governor marks success of housing program for Iowa soldiers

State helps more than 230 Iowa service members buy homes

DES MOINES – In honor of Veterans Day, Lt. Governor Sally Pederson today visited the home of Iowa National Guard Staff Sgt. Lyndsay Thrane of Urbandale. Thrane, a 15-year veteran of the military, was one of more than 230 Iowa soldiers who took advantage of a successful program to spur home purchases in Iowa.

Administered by the Iowa Finance Authority and the Iowa National Guard, *The Guard & Reserve Homebuyer Benefit Program* provided dollar-for-dollar matching grants up to \$5,000 toward the purchase of a home. Launched in March with a \$1.05 million state allocation, *The Guard & Reserve Homebuyer Benefit Program* was available to military personnel who served or serve on active duty between September 11, 2001, and June 30, 2006. Members of the National Guard, Reserve or Active Duty Components of the Armed Forces were eligible for the funds.

In little more than eight months, the program had allocated its final dollars, helping 237 service members buy homes in 108 Iowa communities. Iowa is the only state that has offered this type of program for its military personnel.

"Iowa's Armed Services members have and are making great sacrifices to ensure our many freedoms," Lt. Governor Pederson said. "I'm proud that *The Guard & Reserve Homebuyer Benefit Program* was able to help our brave men and women attain the dream of owning a home. We should be proud that these people are our neighbors."

Thrane, who returned this spring from more than a year in Kuwait, used *The Guard & Reserve Homebuyer Benefit Program* to purchase a three-bedroom home in Urbandale for herself and her 10-year-old son. Because of the grant, Thrane was able to leverage her own money and purchase a larger, newer home. Previously, she and her son lived in a rental unit.

"While I was deployed in Kuwait, I learned to value the many comforts of home that we so often take for granted. And I looked forward to the day that I would come home and find a house to move into with my son," Thrane said. "Without the assistance of *The Guard & Reserve Homebuyer Benefit Program*, I'm not certain that I would have been able to buy as nice a home as we live in today. Since we have moved in, my son and I both have enjoyed giving the house the personal touches that make it our home."

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